

Redistricting Task Force Outreach and Support FINAL REPORT

Civic Edge Consulting
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**SAN FRANCISCO 2022
REDISTRICTING**



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Section 1: Project Background	3
Outreach Goals	4
Description of Outreach	4
Outreach Participation	4
Section 2: Outreach Completed + Takeaways	5
Redistricting Branding and Materials	5
<i>Flyers</i>	5
<i>Fact Sheet</i>	6
City-Wide Email Blasts	6
<i>Newsletter Outreach Background</i>	6
<i>Email Blast Content</i>	6
<i>Metrics and Success Rates</i>	7
Targeted District-Specific Outreach	7
<i>Description of Outreach</i>	7
<i>Targeted Outreach Takeaways</i>	8
Section 3: Findings and Communication	9
Outreach Findings	9
<i>RDTF Meeting Schedule</i>	9
<i>In-Language Materials</i>	9
<i>In-Language Task Force Meetings</i>	9
<i>Community Involvement</i>	10
Section 4: Reflections & Recommendations	10
Communication Challenges	10
<i>City Departments</i>	10
<i>Task Force Members</i>	10
Future Outreach Recommendations	11
<i>Coordinate with Census Outreach</i>	11
<i>Increase Scope & Capacity</i>	12
Conclusion	12



Introduction

Every ten years, federal census data is used to establish new San Francisco Supervisorial district boundaries that reflect changes in the population, ensure equal representation of elected officials, and distribute equitable funding and resources. This process is overseen by the Redistricting Task Force (RDTF) that ensures the boundaries comply with the legal requirements set in federal, state, and local law. The Task Force aspired to encourage public participation by holding multiple community hearings to receive input from those living in San Francisco.

In September 2021, Civic Edge Consulting was retained by the Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors (Clerk's Office) to conduct community outreach and stakeholder engagement, and communicate about district meetings to support the redistricting process. Civic Edge led a broad citywide outreach coordination for the public hearings and specific outreach targeting communities of interest throughout San Francisco. Our approach was based on the understanding that genuinely engaging the people of San Francisco requires more than meeting notifications or public access - it takes creative strategies to meet people where they are, understand needs and access points, communicate with cultural competency, and collect meaningful data that leads to more equitable outcomes.

This final report provides an overview of the project, a summary of Civic Edge's outreach deliverables, key takeaways, and future outreach and communications recommendations.

Section 1: Project Background

The Redistricting Task Force aimed to reach San Francisco residents citywide while engaging in a fair and equitable redistricting process. The RDTF specifically wanted to reach our most historically disenfranchised communities, so the outreach focused on community-based organizations - including cultural districts, direct services, and language support programs - and Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) leaders throughout the City. Since the overarching goal of redistricting is to even out district population densities, districts would likely experience a change in their population density throughout the process. The Redistricting Task Force's primary role is to hear the opinions and suggestions of members of the community while also considering all relevant factors, including the potential outcome that communities of interest may be split or merged.

Outreach efforts reflect the direction given by the Task Force members to push out information digitally and motivate residents to participate in RDTF meetings. Despite a short timeline and limited resources, Civic Edge offered several creative strategies and methods for maximizing community-based engagement and connecting with residents citywide. Throughout our role as outreach consultants, our plan and strategies evolved as directed by the Task Force members and feedback from the public.

Outreach Goals

The goals outlined below were intended to serve as a guide to the work we projected to complete during our contract with the Clerk's Office. As project details developed and the messaging evolved to support community engagement, these goals informed the overall strategic execution of project outreach.

Description of Outreach

Civic Edge's expertise in a wide range of community outreach and engagement tactics propelled a public engagement plan intended to inform and educate the public about the redistricting process, connect with underserved communities and neighborhoods, and encourage resident participation. Through this outreach effort, we engaged communities and stakeholder groups that included—but were not limited to—high-priority neighborhood groups, merchant associations, and community-based organizations in each Supervisorial District. Additionally, Civic Edge publicized the schedule and coordination of all redistricting meetings and identified and provided resources to all organizations contacted. To ensure the Task Force had consistent outreach updates, Civic Edge attended multiple public meetings to develop and present regular briefings on the status of community engagement.

Outreach Participation

Civic Edge's ultimate goal was to maximize public awareness of the redistricting effort by encouraging community attendance and participation in the planning and decision process. To that end, the outline strategy remained focused on:

- Identifying community-led organizations to expand the reach of RDTF information to city-wide residents
- Determining appropriate methods for outreach efforts for a broad yet diverse audience
- Developing marketing materials accessible digitally and in print
- Collaborating actively with the Clerk's Office, Department of Elections and Task Force members to hone the strategy for community engagement

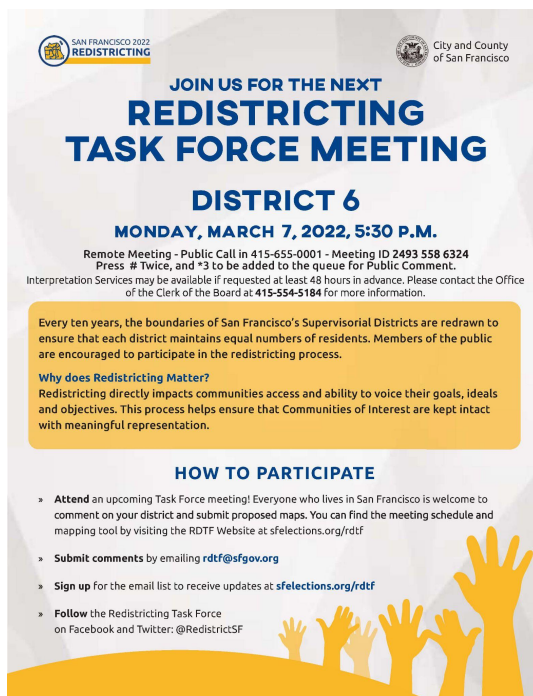
Section 2: Outreach Completed + Takeaways

Community participation and engagement in the Redistricting process was central to Civic Edge's work. Project outreach was carried out through the following three tracks:

1. Creation of branding, materials, and collateral
2. City-wide email blasts
3. Targeted community-based organization outreach

Redistricting Branding and Materials

At the onset, Civic Edge redesigned the Redistricting Task Force's branding, creating new graphics and logos to span all the Redistricting materials and collateral for a cohesive look and feel. These materials were shared through the city-wide newsletters and targeted outreach, and quickly, the new design created for the Redistricting Task Force's collateral was recognizable as the project's visual identity. After creating the RDTF branding and incorporating it onto official redistricting outreach materials, the logo was utilized by the internal RDTF Outreach team, members of the public, elected officials, and community organizations to help spread the word about RDTF Meetings.



Flyers

Civic Edge created a flyer template to advertise upcoming Task Force Meetings. We created a unique flyer for each RDTF Meeting with relevant information, such as the Zoom Meeting ID and call-in information, a short blurb about redistricting, and ways for the community to participate in the process. To account for those accessing the flyers online, each meeting flyer also included hyperlinks to the meeting webpages and the resources listed in the "How to Participate" section.

Civic Edge worked to incorporate any requested edits to the flyers' contents throughout the project and updated the formatting for all Task Force meeting flyers through April 13.

Fact Sheet

A two-sided fact sheet was created in collaboration with the Task Force as a resource and guide for members of the public to learn more about San Francisco Redistricting. The fact sheet was included in targeted outreach for individual community members and groups to disseminate to their networks.

Let Your Voice Be Heard!

What is Redistricting?

Redistricting is a once-a-decade exercise that draws lines of fair engagement and representation of our neighborhoods. It is an important part of our democracy that preserves our residents' rights of fair representation while promoting participation of our diverse citizens of various ethnic backgrounds, cultural demographics, and communities of interest.

Every ten years, the US Government conducts a nationwide census to count all people living in the United States. Based on the results of this census, new boundary lines are drawn for congressional, state, and local districts, including the San Francisco Supervisorial Districts, to ensure that voting districts are reflective of recorded population changes.

Why Does Redistricting Matter?

As the population of San Francisco grows and shifts, the City is legally required to redraw Supervisorial District boundaries every ten years to ensure equal and equitable representation for all residents. Redistricting directly impacts communities' access and ability to voice their goals, ideals, and objectives to their government officials through elections and community policies. This process helps ensure that communities of interest are kept intact with meaningful representation.

Who Will Redraw the New District Boundaries?

The RDTF is a diverse group of nine people appointed by the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors and the Elections Commission. It is responsible for drawing the new San Francisco Supervisorial District boundaries that will be used for the next ten years. The RDTF will conduct public meetings to collect testimony from residents about their communities and consider their input as they draw the new lines. The RDTF will adopt the new supervisorial district map before April 15, 2022.

How can I get involved?

- Attend upcoming Task Force Meetings
- Submit your district input using our mapping tool or by emailing rdtf@sfgov.org
- Ask general Task Force-related questions by emailing rdtf@sfgov.org or calling (415) 554-4445
- Follow the Task Force on Facebook and Twitter @RedistrictSF

Visit the Task Force website to learn more <https://sflections.org/rdtf>

What are the Criteria for Creating New District Boundaries?

- Districts must be roughly equal in population
- Different parts of the district must connect geographically
- Minimize splitting neighborhoods into multiple districts
- Comply with local, state, and federal requirements, including the Voting Rights Act

What is a Community of Interest and why is it important?

A community of interest is a neighborhood, community, or group of people who share similar social, cultural, and economic interests and would benefit from being maintained in a single district. A community of interest does NOT include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

Keeping communities of interest together is an important principle in redistricting. It can be especially helpful to communities that have been traditionally left out of the political process. Without the participation and input of traditionally disenfranchised and unorganized communities, those who may not have these communities' best interest in mind will define the communities for them.

How can I define a community of interest?

Communities of interest are self-defined by local community members themselves. They can be described by creating maps and profiles describing common social, cultural, and economic threads tying the community together. Other ways that people can describe their communities of interest include:

- Personal Testimonies**
Community members can share examples of things residents share in common and what makes the community unique. Imagine describing the community to a visitor from out of town. What is the community's history?
- Written description**
A written description can describe what connects the people and why it's important that they be kept together.
- Community issues**
Describe how various social, cultural, and economic issues bind the community of interest. Together and differentiate it from surrounding communities. What socioeconomic factors make this community stand out?
- Boundary maps**
Create a map of your neighborhood or area. Mark the street names and significant locations. They can include significant landmarks and gathering places, including social service agencies, community centers, shopping districts, schools, and religious places. You can do this in digital or paper format.

The fact sheet expanded on the redistricting effort and included: a definition of redistricting, explanation of its significance, RDTF background information, ways to get involved, criteria for drawing new district lines, and details about communities of interest (COI).

City-Wide Email Blasts

Newsletter Outreach Background

Prior to Task Force meetings, Civic Edge Consulting designed and sent out regular city-wide email blasts detailing any upcoming meetings and inviting the public to attend. The email blast distribution list was curated through a combination of sources, including Civic Edge's internal contacts (key stakeholders, elected officials, and San Francisco community organizations), the Department of Elections' list of community organizations, SF Planning's list of registered neighborhood groups, sign-ups received from the Redistricting webpage, and all members of the Task Force. Starting at the end of December, **46 city-wide newsletters** were sent throughout the project to an average of **over 900 active subscribers**

per email blast, totalling in over **41,000 emails** sent via our email blasts over the course of the redistricting process.

Email Blast Content

Each RDTF email blast contained key resources and helpful information for members of the public to learn more about redistricting and participate in the process. Each meeting reminder newsletter contained information about direct access to the virtual meeting, including the Webex link and password, call-in information, and a link to the meeting flyer. Supplementary sections included in each email blast contained upcoming meeting flyers, a short blurb about the importance of redistricting, direct links to the SF Redistricting webpage and social media, resources for SF Public Library computer access, and a link to the outreach survey. Where applicable, buttons for Spanish, Filipino, and Chinese-language resources were included. Many of these supplementary items were crucial to support access to information.

Metrics and Success Rates

On average, city-wide email blasts were opened by about **40% of all recipients** and clicked through by 8% of all recipients, far above email marketing standards for successful open rates. Using data shows that emails sent on Mondays at 9am and Fridays at 4pm were most likely to be opened by recipients based on open rates. Clicks and interactions with the email blasts happened most actively during Friday evenings between 5pm and 8pm. Our emails were timed for maximum readership. From the first email blast sent on December 27, 2021, the contact list grew from **692 to 1,120 active subscribers** by the end of the project. Through active contact management, Civic Edge maintained a successful **delivery rate of 95% and higher** through the end of the project. Any individual delivery issues were also efficiently handled as we heard from Task Force members or members of the public about occasional issues.

Targeted District-Specific Outreach

In addition to regular email blasts sent city-wide, Civic Edge also conducted targeted, personalized outreach to **223 specific community organizations** for the RDTF meetings with specific district focuses. By individually contacting each organization and ensuring they were



TONIGHT: Let Your Voice Be Heard at the Redistricting Task Force Mapping Meeting!

Remember to join tonight's San Francisco Redistricting Task Force Meeting at **5:30 PM** to hear mapping updates and provide feedback on where district lines should be drawn. We invite you to share your voice about how district line changes may affect your districts, neighborhoods and communities of interest.

Members of the public can attend the Task Force Mapping Meeting either remotely on Webex or in person. For those attending the meeting in person, the Task Force meeting will be held at **City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 408**. **Members of the public are required to wear masks at all times inside City Hall, regardless of vaccination status. **Please make sure to bring a mask!**

[Click Here to Join the Meeting on Webex](#)

PASSWORD: comment

[Click here for meeting information and schedule \(English\)](#)

[Click here for meeting information and schedule \(Spanish\)](#)

[Click here for meeting information and schedule \(Chinese\)](#)

[Click here for meeting information and schedule \(Filipino\)](#)

Share Your Ideas!

- Show us your neighborhood boundaries with our [online mapping tool](#)
- Tell us about your community of interest by using our [COI input form](#)
- Send comments and hand-drawn maps by emailing rdtf@sfgov.org
- Provide public comment at the Mapping Meeting
 - Call in at: **1 (415) 655-0001, Meeting ID 2482 064 9460**
- Share the **April 4th Mapping Meeting Flyer** with your community before tonight's meeting!

kept up to date on their respective meetings, we found that the targeted priority outreach both effectively expanded the awareness of the San Francisco Redistricting effort and increased community participation at the district-specific meetings.

List of Priority Organizations

Description of Outreach

Through Civic Edge's database of community organizations, the team narrowed down a list of "priority organizations" in each district for individualized outreach ahead of the district-focused Task Force meetings, insulation with Task Force members. Throughout the targeted outreach efforts, additional district organizations were provided by District Supervisors, their legislative aides, and Task Force members.

The targeted outreach consisted of **3 rounds of individually drafted emails** specific to each organization and their home district. Two weeks ahead of a meeting, an initial contact email was sent, informing community leaders of their upcoming meeting and providing relevant materials (i.e., their district meeting flyer and fact sheet in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Filipino). Then, one week before the meeting, a follow-up email was sent to confirm they received the notice and accompanying materials. Finally, a final reminder email was sent one or two days before the meeting with the direct meeting access information to share with their members, staff, and overall community to participate.

In addition to three rounds of emails, Civic Edge called the priority organizations to confirm their awareness of RDTF meetings and further encourage spreading the word and attending upcoming meetings. Throughout the targeted outreach effort, **190 priority organizations were called**, in many cases multiple times. Phone calls were made one week prior to a given meeting to ensure sufficient notice for the community members contacted via phone. Unanswered calls were frequently returned as the Civic Edge team left detailed voicemails for each priority organization that did not pick up the first phone call. In addition to encouraging community participation, the phone calls also helped update outdated contact information for future meeting outreach, inform our team about various community opinions on the Redistricting process, receive feedback on overall outreach, and streamline access to the virtual meetings. After connecting over the phone, many priority organizations maintained active, regular contact with the Civic Edge team by phone and email, with many follow-up conversations regarding meeting information and materials.

82 priority organizations confirmed their attendance and shared contacts by Civic Edge's targeted outreach contacted the team back, confirming their attendance at meetings and sharing the information further with their communities. In addition, these priority organizations aided our outreach efforts by including formal announcements of their district-specific meeting on web pages, social media, newsletters, and distribution lists with our materials and information, often doubling or tripling the reach of meeting notices.

Targeted Outreach Takeaways

After this extensive outreach effort, our team was able to discern some findings that could help inform other similar efforts in the future.

Civic Edge found that individually crafted emails and phone calls – specific and personal to a given organization – amplified community awareness of RDTF meetings through the targeted outreach. They were well worth the additional time required to execute them.

When including concrete requests to share out the information, many personalized emails had immediate responses, questions, thank you's, and updates about a given group's attendance and participation. Most priority organizations replied after the initial or final reminder emails, which also strengthened relationships with these individuals and their organizations.

Direct contact consistently increases community participation in public efforts, especially through phone calls which provide a more intimate touchpoint behind such an extensive, city-wide process. Phone calls provided a helpful opportunity to amplify voices, needs, and concerns of existing/potential communities of interest. Moreover, by having personal names and authentic voices behind the outreach for the project allowed the Civic Edge team to stay in continual contact with organizations that had clarifying questions, updates to share with our team, and requests to remain in contact for notices of future meetings.

Section 3: Findings and Communication

Outreach Findings

A citywide outreach campaign takes months of thoughtful planning and collaboration. Executing an outreach plan centered around community involvement takes active buy-in from the community. Moreover, successfully reaching, informing, and mobilizing a community takes trust and consistency.

Civic Edge found that community members expressed feedback in three key areas of the RDTF outreach efforts:

- 1. Meetings schedule**
- 2. In-language materials**
- 3. In-language task force meetings**

RDTF Meeting Schedule

Community members shared concerns about the schedule of RDTF meetings and coordination of the meeting dates and times. In one instance, a District 3 meeting coincided directly with an annual cultural celebration central to District 3 residents. In another instance, a priority organization communicated meetings scheduled during work hours within the workweek were not sustainable for residents' day-to-day schedules. Overall, Civic Edge fielded feedback

regarding the scheduled meeting times, duration of meetings, and the delayed development of draft maps until late in the redistricting process from a range of community members contacted via outreach.

Based on this feedback, collaboration with cultural districts and consulting community groups while drafting the meeting calendar would have increased overall turnout at RDTF meetings. Most importantly, it would have been a key element in mindfully engaging the diverse makeup of San Francisco residents in the overall redistricting process.

In-Language Materials

Another aspect Civic Edge received feedback about was the marketing material. Civic Edge's branding and marketing material for digital outreach and communications were translated into Spanish, Chinese, and Filipino by the Department of Elections' translation services. The translations allowed for community-based organizations to easily share materials amongst community members. As the availability of multilingual materials undoubtedly allowed for some further reach, there were still many significant gaps that will need to be addressed for the 2032 Redistricting Process, including the lack of materials in other commonly spoken languages besides Spanish, Chinese, and Filipino. Developing culturally relevant material for each historically marginalized community group will need to be developed ahead of time, with community members' input.

In-Language Task Force Meetings

Community input about language services also spanned the language services provided at RDTF meetings. Although the Clerk's Office made a significant effort to provide interpreters at most Task Force meetings, residents who spoke Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, and Filipino who did not speak or understand English could provide public comments and questions in language with an interpreter. However, the rest of the meeting, including relevant responses to questions provided in language, proceeded in English only. A resident who provided public comment at an RDTF meeting referred to this situation as "language justice," emphasizing the need for increased inclusivity and accessibility to ensure community involvement in public processes. We heard from some community members that the lack of complete language services until later in the RDTF meeting schedule deterred members of the public from attending meetings and overall involvement.

Section 4: Reflections & Recommendations

Ten years from now, the redistricting process will happen again. Our goal is to reflect on challenges that have impacted this outreach process and provide recommendations to address them and highlight opportunities to consider in future efforts.

Communication Challenges

Interdepartmental Coordination

Internal communication and coordination with City departments is always a challenge, especially when there is a need for urgency. Leveraging City resources requires a high level of organizational management and clear communication paths. For example, materials were translated through the Department of Elections or translation services from OCIEA, while promoting upcoming meetings required coordination newsletters from elected officials, information technology, and reporting to the Clerk's Office. With six months between convening the first Task Force meeting and the April 15 deadline, many of these communications were rushed, and expectations among staff were not always clear.

Our recommendation for the next redistricting cycle is to hold a kick-off meeting with the selected consultant and all parties supporting the outreach process to develop clear communication pathways, set up regular meetings, formalize roles and responsibilities, and establish workflows. Ideally, this could happen earlier in the process to give the Task Force and staff more time to fine-tune a plan.

Task Force Members

There were inherent challenges to communication between the appointed members and staff/consultants as a public body. Because meetings are held publicly and are subject to the Brown Act, it places consultants in a position to do much of their communication in live meetings that are not a collaborative space for partnership. Additionally, there was no clear understanding of how Task Force members were to communicate with City staff and partners, and how, or if, that information made it back to Civic Edge.

Our recommendation is to create a clear line of communication between all parties as well as work with the outreach consultant to prepare a document detailing the scope, approach to the work, a timeline of deliverables, and basic logistics in terms of staffing/capacity, internal communication channels, and resources/materials.

Future Outreach Recommendations

Coordinate with Census Outreach

With each census, there are many incredible and far-reaching organizations and groups that advocate for their communities and conduct impressive outreach programs. Instead of waiting until the census is done and the data gathered informs the redistricting process, our recommendation is to begin engaging those groups and building a network of partners during the census.

As the city develops a scope for an outreach consultant for the redistricting effort, we recommend partnering with organizations to support the work through CBO grants. Ideally, by the time the Task Force members have been appointed, there will already be a strong

network of community partners with financial resources and a consultant team project managing all the moving parts.

Increase Scope & Capacity

It goes without saying that city-wide outreach is an enormous task, and there is no limit to how much can be done. The standard for community outreach is exceptionally high in San Francisco, and projects of this scale and importance require a large scope, diverse teams, and funding - but most of all, time. Therefore, our recommendation is to begin the planning process well ahead of public meetings (as much as six to nine months ahead), so the priority is implementing the plan and increasing public participation.

Conclusion

Creating a fair and equitable redistricting process is an underlying tenet of democracy. The process requires transparency and public participation, which is the charge of the San Francisco Redistricting Task Force, composed of community representatives who volunteered extraordinary amounts of their time, and the scores of city staff who helped support the effort.

Finally, Civic Edge would like to express its gratitude for being able to participate in this work that is so central to our democracy. We are thrilled that so much engagement has continued to inform this process and hope that it will hopefully lead to a fair and balanced district map for the coming decade.